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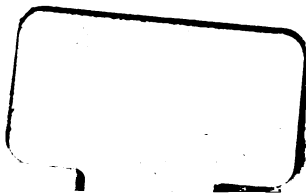
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# THE SPECTRUM OF TRUTH

BY A. B. SHARPE, M.A.

AND

F. AVELING, D.D.

"Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,  
Stains the white radiance of Eternity."

—SHELLEY, *Adonais*.

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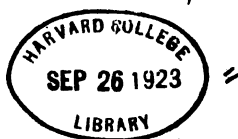
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## THE SPECTRUM OF TRUTH

"PHILOSOPHY is the science of principles": it deals, that is to say, not with any particular branch of knowledge, nor even with knowledge as a whole (which, indeed, in these days of specialisation would be somewhat difficult), but with the background of all knowledge, or the ultimate principles which underlie all knowledge, and on which is formed that kaleidoscopic experience of mankind, both outward and inward, which is, so to speak, its raw material.

Hence the difficulty and obscurity of philosophy; and hence its manifold and apparently inexhaustible variety. For philosophy, unlike other sciences, cannot be brought to the test of experiment; the subjects with which it deals are few and simple, but capable of being considered from indefinitely numerous points of view. And it is upon the point of view adopted that the value of any particular philosophical system chiefly depends. Thus it can hardly be said of any system that it is either true or false as a whole; the question is rather whether its standpoint is such as to give a full view of all

the facts which need to be considered, or whether the influence of a *parti pris* gives undue prominence to some, while, consequently, obscuring the full value of others. Each system has its own value, as throwing new light on one or more aspects of truth, and each has its special limitations and weaknesses; and though the proportions of strength and weakness vary greatly, it is impossible to classify systems in order of merit, as one might classify a grocer's samples. The attitude of a well-balanced mind towards philosophy as a whole, must more and more tend to become eclectic; and it is probably, to a very great extent, in consequence of this inevitable tendency that few, if any, new systems of philosophy (as distinct from experimental science) have appeared during the last hundred and fifty years.

To the compilers of this little work, however, it appears that the scholastic system has, in its main features, a permanent value which belongs to none of the others, and which is due first to the modesty of its aim, which is mainly to analyse the natural and universal modes of human thought, and thereby to impart to it precision and accuracy; secondly, to the exhaustive thoroughness with which this narrow territory is examined; and lastly, to the careful adjustment of scholastic philosophy to the truths of Divine Revelation, which from the first have not merely added to the sum and sphere of human knowledge, but have safeguarded its progress from individual extravagance to an extent which is only now beginning to be clearly perceived.

Accordingly, in comparing the scholastic system with others which have arisen during the last three hundred years, no attempt has been made to disguise the writers' conviction that the former is to be regarded as in principle and so far as it goes, the safest guide to truth and the surest basis for speculation; but the comparison has been made with the desire to harmonise rather than to accentuate differences, and to present each view in the most favourable light possible.

The following pages have no pretension to be a history of philosophy, or to discuss or appraise the merits of different theories. All that is aimed at is to provide a conspectus within the smallest possible compass, of the characteristic attitude of the chief philosophical systems towards the great speculative questions with which philosophy is directly concerned.

Recent, and regrettable theological controversies have turned mainly upon certain great questions that fall strictly within the province of philosophy, and some simple apparatus such as is here provided is a necessary equipment for those who have made no special study of the subjects, but desire to form an opinion of the merits of the questions at issue. And it is hoped that the condensed form of this slight sketch may be of use even to students of philosophy by bringing into prominence certain points of agreement and harmony which are for the most part overlaid and obscured by lengthy disquisitions, but which show clearly in a mere map of the country.

Again, we possess in common a vast number of ideas, thoughts, and principles which are the property of our minds alone, and which are not directly related to any sensations whatever; and the number is continually receiving additions from the operation of countless minds.

The laws—such as those of number, measure, and weight, which we apply to external objects; the principles of social life—such as justice, truth, and honour; the so-called inspirations of genius to which new developments, scientific, artistic, political, or economical, are due—are these something that we create ourselves, or have they an independent existence, so that we only perceive them as being somehow latent in the world around us? And if the latter is the case, how did they get there? If our thoughts are strictly our own, what are we, and by what power do we construct them? If they are not originally our own, but come to us from outside ourselves, whence do they come? whose thoughts are they in the first place? or, on the other hand, can thought exist without a thinker?

Such are the questions which lie at the root of all philosophy; and it is scarcely needful to point out that upon our answers to them must depend in great measure the attitude of our minds towards truth and life in general. Such questions have been the first that occurred to thinking minds ever since the human race began to think at all. They occur, indeed, in a more or less definite form to every child, though the stress of practical necessities causes them in the vast

majority to be forgotten while still unanswered. It is only on the very occasional emergence of some deep problem of religion or morals from the rough and tumble of daily experience that men become conscious of the exceedingly conventional and unsatisfactory character of the foundation on which their scheme of life is based.

A recent biography relates how Carlyle one morning, on emerging from his bath, was suddenly struck by the obscurity in which these matters are involved. "What am I," cried the sage, "at all, at all? I have lived eighty years, and I know nothing whatever about it!" Similar moments have undoubtedly occurred in the personal experience of most of us.

We shall now give some account of the various ways in which the solution of the problem has been attempted. These may be roughly comprehended under four heads.

1. There is a real external world, which is directly known and understood as it really is by the senses and reason together.

2. There is a real external world, directly known to us by sense and reason; and some of our sensations acquaint us with the true qualities of the objects that cause them. Other sensations are indeed excited by external objects, but do not make known to us the qualities by which they are caused, being wholly different from them; as a blow on the head may cause one to "see sparks," though there are no sparks in the hard substance which gives the blow.

3. All the sensations are of this latter character,



and tell us of the existence of a real external world, but nothing whatever of its objective character.

4. There is no external world, but merely subjective states of consciousness, produced in us by Divine agency without the use of any medium whatever.

A more particular description of these different views must now be given, together with some slight account of the considerations upon which each depends.

1. The scholastic philosophy takes the view of existence which naturally commends itself to the great mass of mankind. The world of which our senses tell us is real, and exists independently of us. Since all knowledge comes to us by way of the senses, we must perforce take the reports of the senses as true, so far as they go; not merely as regards the fact of sensation, which is of course unquestionable, but also as regards the external objects of which our senses appear to give evidence. We can only, in fact, question the evidence of sensation by means of knowledge acquired through sensation; but to bring sensation in evidence against itself is self-contradictory, and can logically lead to no result.

But it should be carefully noted that, in this view, the external world does not and can never appeal only to the senses. Along with every sense-impression, and set of impressions, there arises inevitably an intellectual process. In all our experience of the

external world, we are conscious, not merely of the sensible qualities perceived in objects, but also of—

- (1) The form or nature (having nothing to do with the sense in which "form" is now generally used, meaning *shape* or *figure*) of the things perceived, which is intellectually distinguished from their material presentment, and imparts reality to the "matter" (*materia prima*) of which they are composed, but which, apart from its forms, has no sensible existence.
- (2) The substance or underlying and permanent reality, in which the individuality of things consists, and which is naturally and spontaneously conceived by the mind as distinguishable from the qualities, or "accidents," which are more or less variable, and cohere with one another only in virtue of their inherence in their substance.

Thus form, matter, and substance are purely intellectual conceptions. Though indicated by sensation, they are not themselves sensible; and thus the reality of existence has what may be called an ideal side. It is hardly claiming too much for the scholastic view to say that it combines all that either Realism or Idealism (to be noticed presently) has sought to establish.

According to the scholastic doctrine, external objects are known by means of the modifications they give rise to in the sensitive organs of the subject, which is known as sense-perception; and this

adopted and extended the same doctrine. Though it may easily be seen that we know more about the nature of primary than about that of secondary qualities (mainly through the concurrence of several senses in the perception of the former, while the latter can appeal only to one), the difference in the degree of clearness with which each is apprehended is hardly sufficient to establish a real distinction between them; and there is no need altogether to remove colour, taste, sound, etc., from our conception of the external world.

3. Berkeley and Hume exhibited the logical consequences of the theory upheld by Locke, that we know not things but ideas excited in us by them, in a form which was rightly seen by Reid to amount almost to a *reductio ad absurdum*. Since we know only ideas, said Berkeley, how can we know that there is anything behind them to which they may be attributed? We need only believe our ideas to be communicated to us by the direct action of God, without the intervention of any material objects, which, on this theory, do not exist. This view, it may be remarked, is logically irrefragable, once it is admitted that we know only ideas, and not things. Hume, however, applied the same method to the subject which Berkeley had applied to the object of knowledge; and as the latter had got rid of external perceptible objects, so Hume got rid of the perceiving subject, or soul. We know, he considered, only our impressions and ideas. We cannot know anything of the mind receiving them. We have no

right, therefore, to believe in the existence of any mental substance in ourselves as their subject. Thus both subject and object were made to disappear, and the universe vanished into unreality.

Somewhat similar in principle were the views of Geulincx and Malebranche, who derived them from the theory propounded by Descartes of the absolute mutual independence of soul and body. No direct influence can, according to this theory, be exercised by material or extended objects upon the soul; nor can the soul be the author of its own ideas, limited as it is by nature to the function of mere thought. Our ideas of externality must therefore proceed from God, and are in fact modes of the Divine Being. This theory, known as Ontologism, reappears from time to time in slightly different forms. It was the basis of the philosophy of Gioberti and Mamiani, and it has affinities in the ontological theories of Rosmini and Günther.

Two modes of conceiving the universe which differ altogether from those we have noticed, must now be briefly considered.

Spinoza, seeking for a common measure of Descartes' mutually independent matter and spirit, united the two in the notion of a single substance, which is God, and to which thought and extension are both to be attributed. God, as *natura naturans* produces *natura naturata*, but is Himself the immanent cause of both.

Leibnitz conceived the universe as constituted by monads, or unextended atoms (of which God is one,

though uncreated and infinite), each of which is endowed with a special energy, and reflects throughout its own series of perpetual changes the corresponding changes of the rest. The perception of the external world by the soul, itself a monad, is thus accounted for: the human soul and body having been made to pass through parallel series of changes by God, according to a pre-arranged scheme. This theory must not be confounded with the Atomism of Leucippus, Democritus, and Lucretius, or with its modern successor, in both of which the atoms are material and extended.

By each of these existence is conceived as real and objective, though in a totally different sense from that in which it is so conceived by the schoolmen or by modern materialists.

A fresh departure was made by Kant, with whom modern Philosophy in the proper sense is sometimes said to begin. Proceeding by way of an analysis of the mental powers of man, he reached the conclusion that things are known to us only as "empirical phenomena"—*i.e.*, as refracted through certain subjective or *a priori* forms, inherent in the mind as principles of intuition or of thought. Hence, though "things in themselves" must exist, as the ultimate cause of knowledge, they are not known to us *as* they exist, but only in terms, as it were, of our own mental equipment. Thus, *e.g.*, things in themselves have no relation to space, time, unity and plurality, causation, etc.; but we can only know them or think of them under these forms or categories.

From Kant onwards the stream of speculation divides itself into two branches, both of which have in view the resolution of the Kantian dualism of subject and object, by the discovery of a single principle to which all being may be attributed. On the one hand, mind and thought are deduced from a material origin; on the other, thought is conceived to lie at the root of existence, and to have in some way objectified itself to produce the real, or material universe.

The former tendency, the affinities of which with the systems of Spinoza and of Locke are evident, is represented chiefly by the modern scientific or experimental school of which Tyndall, Huxley, J. S. Mill, Bain, and Spencer are among the most distinguished exponents.

The Idealist school includes Fichte, who attributed the external universe to a creative faculty within us, thus extending the Kantian theory of *a priori* forms of cognition; Schelling, who identified subject and object somewhat after the manner of Spinoza, though his point of view, derived as it is from that of Kant, differs from Spinoza's in regarding existence from the subjective or idealistic rather than from the objective or materialistic side; and Hegel, with whom all being originates in the absolute Idea, externalising itself in nature and returning into itself as spirit. Thought, in the Hegelian view, is thus the ultimate ground of reality, which proceeds from the self-evolution of pure or unqualified being; which, again, is identical with not-being, and is in fact God.

The philosophical Pessimists, Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann, may both be reckoned Idealists, and are closely affiliated to Kant. The influence of Hegel is traceable in both, though it is disavowed in unmeasured terms by Schopenhauer. Von Hartmann admits it to a limited extent. The importance that may be assigned to their respective views of Ontology is probably to be ascribed rather to the prominent position of each in the small school of modern Pessimists than to the inherent merits of either view. With Schopenhauer existence is Will, objectivising itself in nature and intelligence and giving rise to the subjective Idea or Representation (*Vorstellung*). Von Hartmann deduces all existence from the unconscious (*Unbewusst*), which includes in itself both the Will and the Idea of Schopenhauer, and continues to play an important part in the evolution of the world. In regard to this last, Hartmann was greatly influenced by the contemporary Darwinian or evolutionary theory of life.

The variety and incoherence of these different views of existence are in themselves sufficiently striking, and become still more so when contrasted with the comparatively narrow limits of the evidence to be dealt with. The conclusion seems to be indicated that there is no safe ground for specula-

tion apart from everyday human experience; and that mere dialectic, or the endeavour to present one of the two factors of the problem—mind and matter—in terms of the other, can lead to no conclusion whatever.

There is no question, it must be remembered, even in the most transcendental methods, as to the actual facts of sensation and reflection. What is in dispute is their significance, or underlying basis. And, though free speculation has doubtless led to incidental results of some value, yet it seems evident that it cannot arrive at a complete solution of the problem.

This consideration naturally brings us into view of what may be called the last word of modern thought, viz., the system now strongly supported in America under the title of Pragmatism, or Humanism; which, in different points of view, might equally well be called Scepticism or Empiricism.

Pragmatism, like Pilate, asks, What is truth? and like him, "stays not for an answer"; or at least, holds the truth of things (in the sense in which it has hitherto been understood, of the correspondence of thought with fact) to be either non-existent or unattainable. Truth, it holds, is merely a quality in our ideas which "helps us to get into satisfactory relation with the rest of our experience." In other words, Ideas are to be tested by their practical consequences, and true ideas are those which practically will *work*. Thus there is no ultimate or final truth, or permanent reality to be known; there is for us



nothing but a progressive adaptation of our ideas to one another.

The teachers of Pragmatism freely admit that it contains nothing new. The ancient Greek sophists, who held that "man is the measure of all things," may be fairly said to have anticipated it; and it has evidently much in common with the experimental philosophy of Bacon and with the analysis of Locke and of Hume.

If, as Pragmatists assert, no principle is more than a "working hypothesis," which may, and probably will be set aside when it has served its turn, there can obviously be no system of Ontology in which we can repose confidence; and religions and scientific convictions are both equally improbable, or can only be held under a very large measure of reserve. But the past history of human thought and enterprise does not suggest that such a system as this is likely to be at all fruitful.

It is evident that closely connected with the subject of Ontology, or what things are, is that of Cosmology, or how they came to be what they are; and the variety of view on the former point is for the most part connected with a corresponding variety on the latter. This we now proceed to consider.

## COSMOLOGY

The original data from which all explanations of the world are built up are found in the reports of the senses as to external reality. On reflection, we accept as a fact what we cannot prove, viz., that there are things outside ourselves, and independent of ourselves: and we relate these things to our sensations, by a process of reason so immediate as to seem an instinct, as cause and effect. Given the world, then, and ourselves as component parts of it, as a fact, the question arises, not only as to what it is, but also how it came to be what it is. To this question various answers have been given by the various schools of philosophy. To a very large extent they all depend upon the solution of the problem of sensation already treated. These we proceed to state.

I. The first answer to the question as to how things came to be as they are, pursued to its farthest limits, is that of the *Creationists*. The world is made up of a great number of finite and changeable units, in which a certain order, succession, and set of relationships is to be observed. This order, succession, and set of relationships gives evidence of design and purposiveness. It cannot be ascribed to chance because of its regularity, nor to blind nature because of its evident design. It is, therefore, to be inferred that the government of the world, as we know it, is

due to an intelligence planning and executing the whole course of nature. But beyond this rises the further question as to the origin, not only of the order and regularity, but of the actual things that are subject to these. The *Creationist* explains this origin as due to the action of an absolute, eternal, and infinite intelligence, eternally conceiving modes in which finite being may imitate itself under the conditions of time and space. This intelligence *creates* the world—that is to say, produces it out of nothing pre-existing. Creation, thus considered, is causation of a peculiar—and, indeed, of a unique—type, not perceived in experience, either of sensation or of volition. All causal action with which we are acquainted, in ourselves or in nature, operates upon existing things. In creation, the creating cause operates on nothing already existing, whether within or without itself. The conception is one that is derived from the essential contingency of all the objects that are presented to us in sensation. No one of the things with which human experience—whether popular or scientific—is acquainted can be called necessary. Nothing that we know in sensation is a being that exists in so necessary a manner that it cannot cease to exist. All is subject to change, alteration, corruption. Therefore the world, that is, all the objects that together go to make up the world as we know it, exists; but not because of any inherent necessity of existing. But that anything should exist at all, our thought, from which we cannot escape, demands necessity. And, if it is not to be

discovered in the things with which we are put in contact in sensation, our reason demands, as an explanation and a justification of their existence, a being somewhere that does exist of necessity, to account for them.

Or the case may be stated thus. The constitutive nature (or essence) of none of the objects with which we are put in touch in sensation is the same thing as its existence. That is to say, the actual being of a thing in the world—the fact that it is in the world—does not depend upon its possible nature. If it did, all possible things would have to exist, and would, moreover, be incapable of alteration or change. Each and every thing in the world would have to exist as it is; since, in the supposition, its nature *is* its existence. Therefore, argues the Creationist, we must fall back upon the conception of a being to which existence is essence, and attribute the existence of all other things existing, but not necessarily, to it. And, since such a being, as the pure existence by which all things are brought into being, must not only include in itself the perfections of all created things, but also, by reason of its own limitless existence, must be absolutely perfect, it follows that it is a pure intellectual and volitional entity. In other words, the God of the Creationists is a personal God, unlimited in His essence, which is identified with His existence, at once pure Being, Understanding, and Will.

With such a conception of the Creator, derived by human reason from a consideration of mutable

things, the Creationist solves the problem presented to his mind by the world of sense. He concedes a real existence to that world independent of himself, but makes it, at the same time, dependent upon an absolute Being who wills it to be. And he accounts for the fact that he is able to conceive it as an orderly whole, with its sequences and relationships, by the inference that it does in reality correspond to a Divine Mind, thus eternally conceiving it, and so creating it in space and time.

He admits that there is a difficulty that cannot be solved remaining, after his explanation of the world is given. But he claims that he has reduced the difficulty to a minimum. Precisely *how* God creates is, he tells us, a mystery, but that there is a God, and that He does create, is the only supposition upon which either the sensible world, or sensation, or thought, is possible. He thus infers something not directly given in sensation by a process of thought that ends in an inscrutable Being, transcendently differing from all the original data, yet necessitated by reason as the sole explanation by which a rational and coherent account can be given of the universe.

His formula may be briefly stated as follows: Sense-experience and reason are conceivable and possible only in the light of an intelligent first cause of the world. There is, therefore, such a cause, to whose action all things are to be ascribed, and that action is a complete and original production of things from nothingness.

*N.B.*—The foregoing is not to be mistaken for an

attempt to prove the existence of God (a subject treated in another section). It is no more than a statement of the considerations that influence the Creationist in assigning the origin of the world to the creative act of a transcendent and personal God.

2. A second answer to the question—or rather, a statement of the problem—is that of Kant (1724-1804), of which several other answers that have been given are developments or modifications. Starting from the same data of sense-experience, he comes to the conclusion that it is impossible to reach behind them to a knowledge of the transcendental “thing-in-itself.” Yet there is a form of knowledge not directly derived from experience. This knowledge comprises the *a priori* cognitions, as they are called, such as certain mathematical, physical, and metaphysical judgements that we make, and make necessarily, without directly extracting them, as it were, from sense-data. Into them, as into empty forms, the experiential sense-data enter as content. But as to the world as it really is, apart from the sensation of it—that is to say, as to the noumenal reality underlying the phenomena, we can have no knowledge whatever, except that it is: for our knowledge, strictly speaking, cannot go beyond our experience.

Hence, when we speculate, as all men do speculate, as to the nature and origin of the world given in sensation, we find ourselves confronted with contradictory assertions apparently of equal validity and

strength. Thus, if we arrive at the conclusion (1) that the world had a beginning in time and is limited in space, we also find that it is equally true to conclude that the world is without beginning and without limits in space. Similarly, the following sets of contradictory propositions may be simultaneously maintained:

- (2) A. Every composite body in the world is made up of simple parts.  
B. Nothing exists that is simple.
- (3) A. There are absolutely free, uncaused beginnings of causal series (*i.e.*, series of cause, effect-cause, effect).  
B. Nothing in the world takes place freely, but all is in accordance with natural law.
- (4) A. There is an absolutely necessary being (either as part, or as cause of the world).  
B. No being is absolutely necessary.

These are the four famous Kantian *antinomies*. Their author undertakes to solve them by means of his distinction between the phenomenal and the noumenal worlds (*i.e.*, worlds of sensation and intelligence). With regard to the intelligible world, both assertions in the first and second antinomies are false.\* With regard to the third antinomy, Kant maintains that the proposition A holds good of the noumenal (intelligible) world of things-in-themselves,

\* On his principle that space and time (as simplicity and complexity) are mere forms of sense-perception, and do not exist outside the percipient.

while B is true of the world of phenomena. Similarly with the fourth antinomy. Hence, for these two last, the distinction lies in this, that within the phenomenal world, as perceived by us in sensation, there exists no unconditioned or uncaused cause, while outside that phenomenal world, and as its transcendental ground, there exists the Unconditioned.

But of this Unconditioned, as of the "thing-in-itself," we are capable of knowing nothing. It does not fall under experience, and no theoretical argument, proving its identification with the existence of an all-perfect, all-wise, all-powerful and necessary being can be valid, since, at some point in its course, it would pass beyond the phenomenal experience of which alone we have any knowledge.

Kant, as a consequence of this doctrine, makes use of what he calls the "practical reason" to prove the existence of God. This he does, by showing that the "categorical imperative" of the moral law necessarily postulates God. For the theoretic reason, then, the existence of God is no more than an hypothesis; for the practical, it is a necessary belief.

It will, however, be noticed that the introduction of God at this point, because of the imperative nature of the moral sense, in no way explains either the nature or the origin of the world. That question remains, as before, addressed to the intelligence, and answered, if answer it may be called, by the statement that our knowledge is bounded and limited by our sense-experience, which is of the



phenomenal only; that the world as it really is—the world of things-in-themselves—we cannot know; neither can we assign to it any rational origin.

From Kant onward the answer to the questions raised by the fact of sense-perception can be arranged in the two groups, well distinguished, already mentioned. Instead of an irreconcilable dualism, as in Kant, or a dualism reconciled by the creative act of a personal God, the tendency is towards a monism, either idealistic or materialistic.

3. Thus a third answer to the problem, and a dynamically monistic one, is that of Fichte (1762-1814), which need detain us but for a moment. Accepting Kant's limitation of causality in the sense-knowledge of the world, to phenomena, as well as that of the moral independence of the will, or practical reason, he went further than his predecessor in asserting that not only the "forms" of cognition are supplied by the percipient subject and filled with the content of sense-experience, but that even the data of sense-perception are created by the productive action of the subject. In this view, then, the world given in sense-perception simply does not exist, except in the consciousness of the subject or ego. This ego, of course, is not the individual, but the Absolute, from which Fichte attempts to deduce the individual by the consideration that morality necessitates a distinction between several (individuals).

In contradistinction to the dualism of Kant, it will be perceived that we have here an idealistic type of

monism : for the ego alone, in this system, possesses any reality.

4. Following upon this, both in the order of philosophical development and in historical importance, comes the philosophy of Hegel (1770-1831). In his explanation of what we call the external world of sense, Hegel carries on the leading idea of his whole philosophy into nature. The groundwork of everything is the "Idea" or Thought. Or, rather, the Idea, as the sum of reality and the complete system of reason, is that from which all things have their rise. It is the Idea in itself. But it externalises itself to become "otherness" in the world of nature, and thus becomes refracted, as it were, into particularisations and individuals. So it is conceived and dealt with by the natural sciences. But the true science of being—philosophy—must regard the whole externalisation of the Idea in the forms of the sensible world as a process, in which the unique Idea is refracted but to attain a unity and self-identity once more in the intelligence of man. In other words, without the synthetic powers of the intellect as found in man, the externalisation of the Idea in the world of sense is meaningless to us. Hence, while the Idea, or pure Thought, is the starting-point of Hegel's philosophy, as well as the starting-point in the circle of actual development, it comes into our field of mental vision first in its externalised and individualised form of "otherness" as the world. The true problem is to account for the sum total of reality as conceived lying behind the data of sense-experience.

This is not in any sense a complete statement of the system of thought that Hegel framed. The evolution of the Idea does not cease with its outgoing into what we know as nature, nor with the synthetic form that nature assumes in the contemplating mind of man. The process is not complete when the Idea, as nature, has successively assumed the forms of matter in space, of body, of consciousness and of self-consciousness, for even self-consciousness is not the ultimate goal. A further process of evolution takes place in self-consciousness, by which spirit (the Idea already evolved, through nature, to this point) passes from a subjective form, through an objective, to Absolute Spirit. Evolved to this state, it identifies itself with itself as infinite, uniting the objective with the subjective in intuition, or sensuous knowledge (as Art), in imagination, or subjective feeling (as Religion), and in the subjective-objective of pure thought (as Philosophy).

This brief conspectus will give us several points of contact with, and divergence from, the explanations of the world of sense as already set forth. Hegel, as has been said, has no other starting-point than the Idea, or Thought, whose evolution provides a rational account of all the processes of the world. Thought and Being, for him, are identical. We perceive the truth intuitionally. The unknown "thing-in-itself" of Kant is, for Hegel, Thought. Ultimately, having externalised itself as nature—the point at which Kant inferred the existence of the "thing-in-itself"

—it returns to identity in spirit. If it be denied that thought and being are identical, and that we have an intuition of this, Hegel establishes the position by a critique of the various modern explanations of the objectivity of the world. Where Kant confesses to an ignorance of the true nature and origin of the world manifested to us in sense-experience, and Fichte asserts that we ourselves create it, Hegel makes it a manifestation of Absolute Thought in its process of evolution.

In the previous section, a comparison was made of the various theories as to the nature and meaning of sensation of the external world. Kant, in his rational philosophy, does not, strictly speaking, go beyond this point; Fichte inverts its significance; and Hegel identifies it with an ideal principle (not a cause) from which it flows. The Creationist's starting-point is the world as he finds it, given in the data of sense-perception. He does not limit knowledge to empirical experiences. On the contrary, he claims to abstract from those sensible experiences intellectual conceptions of the nature of the things that together go to form the world. As *he* is capable of thinking them, and of representing them in his thought, so, he reasons, is their Cause capable of thinking them, and does so think them. Thus, and thus only, can they exist at all. They have being because they are thought; not, as Fichte insinuated, as thought by us, but rather, as Hegel asserted, because they are a process of externalised Absolute Thought.

But further, the Creationist is obliged to join issue

with Hegel, in that it is impossible to think, or conceive of, Thought without a Thinker. Thought and being are not identical, except in a supertranscendent Thinker, whose thought, because of his absolute simplicity, is identified with his being. And, again, though this Thinker is absolute, yet, on account of his utter perfection of simplicity, it is impossible that his thought, as identified with his being, should become manifold, and so externalise in the world of sense.

The Creationist mystery—as to how God creates out of nothing—is paralleled and exceeded by that of pantheistic idealism. For in such a system the residual unexplained element of mystery includes a contradiction. The utterly simple—as Absolute Idea or Thought—is indivisible; and it is held by the Creationist that it is a metaphysical impossibility for it to externalise, as composed of parts, in a process of evolution.

Provide Hegel's Thought with a thinking subject, with which it is identified; let it be imitated analogically by finite beings by reason of its thinking (and willing); and, though a mystery is not avoided, the result is the action of a personal God creating the world, neither out of Himself nor out of objects previously existing; but out of nothing.

5. The post-Kantian current of thought, thus far considered, is idealistic in character. There is, however, another current that runs in the opposite direction towards Materialism. And, first, attention

may be given to the system of thought known as Positivism, which, while not frankly materialistic, provides no explanation of the world that advances beyond the confines of matter. Comte (1798-1857), the originator of this system, maintained with Kant, that we can only know that of which our senses inform us. The information conveyed to us from the world, by means of sense-perception, is of facts, and of facts alone. We know facts, then; and are capable of relating them one to another in such a manner as to obtain also a knowledge of these relationships. Beyond this point we cannot go. It is useless to attempt any enquiry as to the ultimate nature or origin of the facts that we perceive. Consequently, all knowledge is limited to the data of sense-perception and the interrelation of these data by means of the discoverable laws of nature. No explanation is offered of the problem, no answer is given to the primary question: but we are bidden to be content to learn what we can of the facts and laws of the world, and to abandon as futile any attempt to transcend them.

This system agrees with that of Kant in limiting knowledge to the data of sense-perception, while it differs from it in ignoring the being of the "thing-in-itself" that is inferred as lying behind the facts. It is opposed to that of Hegel, in that it rests in the region of the sensuous; while Hegel's idealism soars at once to the noumenal, and explains apparent sensuous experience as in reality a manifestation of the Absolute Thought. It coincides with the philo-

sophy of the Creationists in beginning with the facts of sense-perception ; but stops short of recognising that the reason can transcend these concrete facts, reach to the individual things that they interpret and convey to us from without, and explain nature, and the whole course of nature, by reference to a spiritual and personal principle, logically inferred by induction from the original data of sense.

By reducing the science of psychology to physiology, Comte discovers his materialistic bias, and renders the thought-process just alluded to, in his view, impossible.

6. Among the principal modern advocates of a purely materialistic conception of the world and explanation of its nature, may be mentioned Vogt (1817-95), Moleschott (1822-93), Buechner, and Haeckel. The French Materialists—the Encyclopedists (1751-72), Diderot, and d'Alembert ; Holbach (1723-89), La Mettrie (1709-51), Cabanis (1757-1808), professed substantially the same doctrine. As a rule, Materialism is put before the world rather as a result of scientific investigation than as a philosophical theory. Still, though it refuses, like Positivism, to go beyond the concrete facts and laws of nature which form the subject-matter of the various sciences, it takes upon itself to deny that there is anything beyond matter, and assigns this as the ultimate reality. Thus, though occasionally professed by men of undoubted scientific attainments in some one or other of the branches of science, it is, accurately

speaking, a purely philosophical doctrine offered as an explanation of the nature and origin of the world. It has no more strictly scientific value than the dualism of Kant, the idealism of Hegel, or the philosophy of the Creationists.

Briefly, Materialism assumes that nothing can be known but matter and the manifestations of matter. It rests in the data of the senses, in that it considers the complete sum of existence as the totality of individual concrete things. Whatever is spiritual is a delusion. The mind itself is incapable of extracting spiritual ideas, or notions, from matter, for the mind itself is material. We shall have occasion to enter into this doctrine more fully in the section dealing with psychology. Here it is sufficient to point out that, according to Materialism, matter *plus* force (which is inseparable from matter and cannot be conceived apart from it) is the only reality.

The terms and proofs employed by Materialists as a rule are very vague, and lacking in precision. Not infrequently, a more or less complete criticism of idealistic or dualistic theories is advanced as a sort of indirect demonstration of the truth of the Materialistic hypothesis, when no direct evidence in its favour is adduced. Professor Haeckel is a notable exception to many in his statement of the case. He lays down a number of propositions with regard to the universe as a whole, by means of which he attempts to provide a direct proof of his materialistic Monism. These propositions—which it is not our purpose here to set out at length or to criticise—he advances as the



results of scientific research. The problem is not, as has been noted, a scientific one, but a philosophical. Science, as science, knows nothing as to whether space is infinite or not; whether, if infinite, it is completely filled, or not; whether duration is infinite, as never having had a beginning and never to have an end, or not; and so on. Yet these conceptions are those that enter into the propositions upon which Haeckel bases his Monism. There is a vice of thought to be found here that invalidates the conclusion. It arises principally from a confusion of categories—those highly abstract and specialised ones required for the handling of the specific subject-matter of the individual sciences being introduced universally, and disastrously, into philosophy, being extended beyond the point to which they legitimately reach. To regulate the science of Being by the conceptions employed in abstract mathematics or mechanical physics, is parallel to an attempt to regulate the science of mathematics by the peculiar abstract conceptions of botany or chemistry.

The general conclusion, however, of Materialism—its answer to the question as to the nature and origin of the world as we know it—is, that its nature is material (matter in motion), that it had no origin, but is infinite in time, as it is also in space. No explanation, scientific or philosophical, is given as to how the material and extended can be either spatially or temporally infinite.

This theory, as will be perceived, refuses to recognise that it has anything in common with those that

have already been instanced, except the preliminary fact of sensuous experience, which is itself held to be a property of matter, acted upon by matter.

Of all adduced, it is the most dissimilar to that of the Creationists, to which it opposes a blank denial. Given the abstracting power of the "acting intellect," and a consequent knowledge of the noumenal, together with (what follows) a justification of the following up of the chain of causality beyond the sphere of the merely sensible, and Kant's dualism is transformed into Creationism. Granted as a fact, that we, thought and all, are but a part of the universe of things, and Fichte's Thinker must be other than ourselves, and *one from which we are not logically deducible*. Given an Absolute Thinking Being, so utterly simple as to be impartible, and the world of sense springs into being, neither out of Himself, nor out of any pre-existing material existence, by the creative act of His Thought and Will.

The grave objections to any purely Materialistic explanation of the world, together with the limitation of possible knowledge to that of sense-experience, or fact alone, by the theory of Agnosticism, have been a potent cause in the formation of a new attitude of mind with regard to the problem at issue. Materialistic hypotheses have for a long time been falling into disrepute, as entirely unsatisfactory, among thinking men. The nature and justification of the process of abstraction from the individual data of sense to the noumenal reality that it conveys have,

at any rate since the time of Kant, been obscured and lost. Yet, every thinking man is conscious of the fact that behind and beyond all that appears there may be some fixed truth or absolute reality ; and he is not satisfied with the vagueness of the Unconditioned, or the ethereal abstraction of Pure Thought. Consequently, despairing, seemingly, of finding any rational answer to the ever-present riddle, he has had recourse to non-rational hypotheses. Of these, two may be briefly stated.

7. Reference has already been made to the doctrine of Pragmatism. In this system no direct attention is paid to the intellectual explanation of the world of sense. Instead of questioning the data afforded by sense-experience with a view to discovering the nature and origin of that which it presents to us, and instead of holding that the test of truth is to be found in and by reason alone, Pragmatism eschews such considerations and bases itself frankly upon the value of the practical issues of beliefs held. Thus, the criterion of a truth is its working out in actual life. The conduct it suggests, the life it produces, is its demonstration. It embodies, in a sense, a utilitarian and an appreciative valuation of truth and reality, rather than a rational one. It is of the will rather than of the intellect, of the heart rather than the head. The ideas we may have, then, or the lack of ideas, as to the constitution and origin of the world in which we live, are to be tested by the effect that they produce in our life and conduct ; and

we are to accept those as (provisionally) true that work out best in that direction.

8. Akin to this substitute for the rational investigation of the problem at issue is that which makes the heart and its needs, or cravings, the ultimate test of truth: a principle which characterises the unsystematic position which now goes by the name of Modernism. There is, according to this view, a need in the human heart, of something not found within itself, nor discoverable by the methods of science or history. To this need the heart responds, particularly in the matter of religion; and, in virtue of some unexplained sense of which it is possessed, proceeds to realise that need by positing an object. This object is present to the heart both as object of the "sense" and as its cause: and its realisation, or manifestation,\* is revelation.

Both these systems are based upon an asserted or implied intellectual Agnosticism; and both, while, as a matter of fact, they are obliged to employ the ordinary processes of reasoning to state their theories, reduce the knowledge of reality to a purely relative pseudo-mysticism.

All the theories of the world and its origin to which reference has so far been made, whether idealistic or materialistic (with the sole exception of

\* It is metaphorical to speak of a "manifestation" to, or a "realisation" by the heart, which cannot be taken to stand for any cognitive faculty. But no other words seem quite to hit the sense.

section we considered the world as a whole with a view to discovering its nature and its origin, here we are occupied with one definite class of beings found in the world. Our subject-matter is man and man's soul. Our data will be the characteristics of man; and our conclusion his nature.

And, since man has much in common with other beings existing in the world around us, there are many aspects in which he does not seem to differ to any appreciable extent from them. Thus, having a body, he is material. There is a mechanics and a chemistry applicable to him as to other material beings. Again, his body is an organised structure, capable of functioning in the acts of life. Consequently, there is an anatomy, a physiology, a biology, in which the structures and functions of man's organs are studied, as are those of other animals. He possesses a set of sense organs, and a nervous system, that has very much in common with the more highly organised animals, and he will show, naturally, a very marked similarity with them in their use. But one thing he possesses that is distinctive. He is an intellectual being, and has the power of representing to himself, in an ideal manner, the material things with which he is surrounded. His mental activity does not terminate in phenomenal perception, but continues beyond the range of the merely sensible. He is able to arrange and compare what has come to him by way of sense, to spiritualise it, as it were, in such a fashion that, whereas the sense had an impression of a phenomenon

*here and now*, he has an idea of a reality underlying it, that is not, as an ideal conception, limited to the here or the now in which its concrete embodiment is presented. He can rise from the contemplation of one single thing to that of the universal type that is realised in it. He can make judgements in which two ideas are brought together; and reason, by comparing two such ideas with a third. He can form conceptions of abstract qualities, such as justice and honour and goodness; and he can will to act in conformity with the conceptions that he has formed. In short, without attempting here to draw any hard-and-fast line between the sensation of brute animals and the intellectual powers of man, we can at once turn to the highest powers that we find manifested in him, and form our conclusion as to his nature in strict conformity with these. It need not be asserted that man is a purely spiritual being—which he manifestly is not—neither need it be supposed that “soul” and body are two separate and complete beings—a view that is contradicted by the unity of consciousness. It is not the business of the philosopher to assert or to suppose, but to examine objectively, and, by an analysis of the properties of his subject, form his conclusions as to its nature.

1. The most widely representative school holds that man is an individual resulting from the union of two principles, one of which he shares in common with all material things. This principle—“matter”—is considered to be of itself an indeterminate but

determinable one. It is determined, or specified to the various beings in the material universe by means of a second underlying principle. Thus, while *matter*, as the permanent substratum of change, or alteration, is of itself nothing definite, it successively appears in definite forms accordingly as it is actuated by one or another of the active principles of being. This second principle is commonly known as "*form*." It is of its nature definite and determined, the determinant of matter, to which it is united. Man is not looked upon as an exception to the rule by which all material things are considered as intrinsically composed of these two principles.

His soul has to his body the relationship of a *form* to the *matter* it actuates, and together they constitute one being. Consequently, in this view, man, like any other material thing, has a formal principle by which he is man, rather than stone, tree, or dog: and it only remains to be seen whether or no this formal principle in human beings in any way corresponds to the popular notion of the soul.

We have seen that it is by an examination of the higher powers of man that we reach a knowledge of his nature. This nature is his because of the formal principle that, as we have just observed, differentiates him from all other material beings.

It is asserted that there are certain vital activities of man that do not depend upon any corporeal organ. If this be true, the formal principle or soul, will be seen to have an immaterial nature, as well

as the power of specifying matter. For that only which is immaterial can act immaterially.

The "soul," in this view, has been roughly likened to a swimmer whose head is above water. It is immersed in matter up to a certain point, beyond which its action exhibits it as free from the limitations of matter. Of the several considerations that are advanced in support of this view, the following may be given :—

(a) Whereas the senses can only report the particular, we are capable of forming, or possessing general ideas : *i.e.*, typical conceptions, even of material things, apart from all their individual determining characteristics, such as position in time, space, etc. Such typical ideas are known as "universals," and represent the essential natures of the things to which they refer. The typical idea of "man," for example, may be, and is, verified in the concrete individuals, Peter, James, and John, etc., from whom it is derived. But of itself it is neither Peter, nor James, nor John. It is the essential nature of man viewed apart from all material and determining characteristics. Such an idea would be an impossibility for any sense faculty which, on account of the material organ in which it resides, can only represent definite aspects of definite material things. Therefore, it is to be attributed to a faculty that possesses no such organ ; *i.e.*, that it is as immaterial and as spiritual as the abstract object it contemplates.

The same consideration may be envisaged from a



slightly different point of view, again taking into account the materiality of the objects of sense. Whatever sensation may be in itself, it is clear that certain sensations and certain modifications of sensation are excluded from consciousness by the material disposition of the sensitive organ. Thus the eye cannot perceive sound, nor the ear colour, etc. Moreover, the presence in the organ of any particular material disposition, prevents that particular sensation; as, for instance, a high temperature in the hand prevents the sensation of warmth in the water into which it is plunged. But the mind is able to represent to itself the natures and qualities of all material things; and consequently, being a receptive faculty, as are the senses, it is judged to be entirely free from any intrinsic material disposition or modification. In other words, it is immaterial.

(b) A further striking consideration is that arising from the nature of the intellectual act known as reflection. No sense faculty can perceive the fact that it is in operation. The eye, for example, perceives a colour; but neither the eye nor the faculty of vision can be said to see that it sees. At most, what is called the "common sense"—that faculty to which all the exterior senses refer their data—can be said to realise the acts of vision, or hearing, or tasting, etc. But even the "common sense" is incapable of completely realising its own act. Thus, further, no sense can "know" itself any more than, as we have seen, it is capable of realising its own

act. The eye cannot see itself, neither can the faculty of vision tell what vision is. On the contrary, the intellectual faculty is not only capable of possessing a knowledge of its proper objects (the natures of things external to itself and their manifold relationships), but it realises, at the same time, that it does know these. Moreover, it knows itself, and knows that it knows. It is able to perceive that at one time it understands better than at another, that it has a clearer perception of one truth than of another, and so on.

It is fairly obvious that reflection requires that the faculty now actively reflecting should be able to perceive the entirety of its own prior act, upon which it reflects. And, in order that this should be so, it must not only perceive the object of that prior act, but also—and here the important point—its subject, *i.e.*, itself. Otherwise it would not envisage the prior act as one belonging entirely to itself. It must, therefore, completely reflect upon itself *as a whole*, in a perfect reflex act. But this would be impossible in any organic faculty, on account of the fact that, being organic, it is—or makes use of an organ that is—extended, and has therefore parts without parts. The conclusion drawn, therefore, is that the intellectual faculty is not organic, and employs no organ in its functioning: that it is, in other words, immaterial. In the hypothesis at present under consideration, to support which the foregoing paragraphs have been advanced—that the soul is immaterial—it cannot, obviously, be the

subject of precise physiological observation or experiment. It should be, however, observable in action, from which action its existence and nature may be inferred. This, as a matter of fact, we find to be the case. The hypothesis, therefore, seems to be verified.

With regard to the materialistic hypothesis, which may be anticipated in this connection, the only presumptive argument offered is that from the modifications of the brain matter that take place when we think. The scholastic theory of the union between body and soul fully accounts for this phenomenon as a concomitant condition and not as a cause of thought. The materialistic hypothesis fails, in that it is unable to trace the supposed connection of thought with the matter that "secretes" it. The two things, thought and modification of matter, it may be admitted, appear concomitantly; but there is no perceptible, or assignable, *nexus* between them as effect and cause. On the contrary, a consideration of the essential natures of thought and of material modifications, abruptly separate the one from the other. The soul, then, in the scholastic view, is the formal principle of man. But further than this, it is an immaterial or spiritual principle, capable of existence by itself. That which has an immanent action of its own is, strictly speaking, capable of existing alone. Thus it is a reality, superior to the matter with which it is united, and not derived, as other formal principles are, from the "potentiality" of matter.

The necessary consequence of this view as to the nature of the soul, is the doctrine of its creation. Each individual formal principle in man postulates a creative act to bring it into being. And this follows principally from the considerations—(1) It cannot, being spiritual, come from matter; (2) Neither, being simple, can it be derived, as it were, by fissure, from another soul (traducianism); (3) Being in its proper and natural state only when united to the body as its formal principle, it cannot be held, naturally at any rate, to pre-exist the body to which it is united.

It will be observed that the continued existence of the soul after its separation from the body has its strongest demonstration in the foregoing principles. Having an operation peculiarly its own, it has an existence of its own; and there is no reason to suppose that such an existence will ever terminate. Since the soul is simple, it cannot be divided, and consequently cannot "die" in any natural sense of the word. For to die is for a living being to disintegrate: and that, for the soul, is an impossibility. It might be annihilated by the cause that created it; but there is no assignable reason to suppose that it will so be annihilated, and every reason to presume the contrary.

There is one further consideration that may be made with some profit in this connection. The intelligence is a faculty in which the world is represented ideally; that is to say, the natures of things, and not the mere phenomena, are related in the

understanding as an intelligible kosmos. But that this should be possible, it is necessary to admit an intelligible over and above a sensible aspect of things. And, to admit this, the further admission must be made that their origin also is from an intelligence. As, clearly, such intelligence is not ours, it follows that the prime enquiry of psychology leads us back to creationism and God.

The foregoing exceedingly brief outline of one line of thought that is to be found in the scholastic psychology must serve as an indication, rather than as a reasoned statement of its strength and cogency. Rarely does it exceed the grasp of a moderately endowed mind. Indeed, one of its chief claims to attention lies in the patent fact of its simplicity, caution, discrimination, and reasonableness.

2. A second view is that of Materialism. Mind is asserted to be the outcome of matter. In some form or other, all materialistic hypotheses include what are generally known as psychic operations, as the result of the functioning of organised matter. No attempt is made to explain why all matter should not exhibit these activities, nor why organised matter should not always do so. Thought and consciousness are sometimes asserted to be built up from the rudimentary thought and consciousness attached to the original atoms from which the organism is formed: but no reason is put forward to establish the fact of such atomic thought or consciousness, and no explanation is given as to how an inseparable and indivisible consciousness, such as

that which we possess, can be the result of an aggregation of parts. The commonest and at the same time the most direct assertion of Materialism, to which all forms of it may ultimately be reduced, is that thought is a secretion of the brain. In this view either the purely psychic activities noticed in the previous sub-section must be ignored, or else they must be reduced to material (mechanical) forces. From the examination of their intrinsic nature that we have just made, it seems that the latter course is impossible, and that Materialism here, as in ontology and cosmology, by drawing an arbitrary line sharply at the confines of the material and refusing to go a step beyond it, simply cuts itself off from any consideration of a possible supra-material. In consequence of this attitude of Materialism, psychology is treated as physiology, and the problems of the rational psychologist are viewed only as they have a concomitant physiological aspect. This view, however, is not altogether out of harmony with the scholastic, which recognises the fact that there is always a physiological concomitant to every psychological activity. But a limitation of view to the one aspect cannot secure an adequate explanation of the whole; and Materialism seems to fall short of giving any rational account of mind, by reason of its *a priori* limitation to the strictly corporeal. The physiological standpoint certainly is one that must not be neglected; but it is only in a critical analysis of the intrinsic nature of thought, volition, and consciousness that any true conclusion

can be reached. And this Materialism is confessedly unwilling to make.

3. Idealism provides a third answer to the problem. Thought is not a result of matter; but, on the contrary, matter is the outcome of thought. It is true that, for each one of us, matter only has an existence as far as it is capable of being represented in our consciousness. But it is no less true that we are obliged to recognise the existence of matter, and of thought as well, independently of our thinking.

Hence the material world is sometimes said to be (as by Hegel) the state of otherness in which the Universal Idea hypostasises itself; and the thought of individuals a point in the process of evolution by which the Idea returns to itself once more from the state of otherness. The view provides no account of the fact that human consciousness is as personal and indivisible as is human thought.

No form of Idealism (Fichte, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Von Hartmann) accounts for the appearance of this indivisible and self-conscious personality in human beings; a difficulty that is common to both Idealism and Materialism in all their forms. Some writers seem to suppose that self-conscious personality is a latent or diffused quality of the universe, and effloresces into successive generations of individuals, in some such way as a tree bears leaves year after year. But such a supposition is a mere playing with words. It is really equivalent to saying that self-consciousness exists without consciousness, that indivisibility exists in division, that personality may

be impersonal. The elements of the leaves may be traced in the constitution of the tree bearing them and in the energy by which they are produced. The elements of personal self-consciousness cannot be so traced in the material world, except, as has already been observed, by a method of reasoning that consists in assuming beforehand the conclusion to be proved.

At most, then, Idealism asserts a unifying principle by means of which it attempts to explain all things. The insuperable objection to the principle adopted, noticeable in cosmology, is intensified in psychology, where it comes into conflict with our primitive consciousness of personality. The Idea, as pure idea, and not as the Thought of an omnipotent Thinker, would seem to be perfectly simple, and therefore inseparable from itself. Hence its passage into otherness—or matter—would seem to imply a contradiction in terms. So, also, its coming back from the state of otherness, in the form of self-consciousness, to spirit, would imply the origin of a simple and indivisible consciousness from heterogeneous and infinitely divided factors—apparently also a contradiction in terms.

There is very much shared in common by this theory and that of Materialism. The idealistic hypothesis takes us one step further back. It accounts for human consciousness and thought by pointing to matter, thus far agreeing with Materialism; but in accounting for matter by pointing to a prior Thought, it transcends the Materialistic



philosophy. There is, therefore, a double affinity between it and Scholasticism.' It is capable of providing a basis for rational psychology as well as for physiology. But the objection urged against Materialism by the scholastics may be urged with the same weight in this connection.

Materialism and Idealism appear like the two sides of a medal, each providing a partial and an incomplete view. The transition from matter to thought is quite as impossible as the materialist would make it. If such a transition were possible, then thought would not be thought in the scholastic and common-sense view. It would be what the materialist says it is—transformed matter. So, too, the transition from thought to matter is as unreal as the idealistic view makes it appear. For matter, in this view, is really no more than disguised thought. The true difficulty is overcome in both these systems verbally rather than essentially. It is frankly recognised in the scholastic philosophy, without any beating about the bush. Thought, says the scholastic, is not matter. Thought cannot become matter; and matter cannot become thought. Hence the creationist mystery, honestly confessed, and the incommensurability of thought and matter. Hence also the theory of union between soul and body in man, which safeguards the possibility of knowledge without doing violence to common sense or to any scientific facts that may be observed.

The chasm that separates thought from sense is not filled by either of the two systems under con-

sideration. The mere statement that thought is a form of mechanical energy can carry no weight; and we have nothing from the materialist side beyond the bare statement. No proof is offered, as we have seen, but only an unverified, and apparently unverifiable hypothesis. The idealist does not indeed deny the reality of matter as the materialist denies that of thought; but he makes it the result of thought, and gives us no real notion as to how the transition from the one to the other is effected. The scholastic, after all, does no more than supply what is wanting in each system from the other, and frankly recognises (see "Cosmology") the existence of an impassable chasm that is to be found in all systems. On the one hand, the motive power of material energy is thought—in the last resort, the Divine Thought. On the other hand, matter is not thought, nor thought matter; though the two are reducible to a common origin in the Divine act of creation—the point at which the inscrutable chasm occurs—the transition, by Divine power, from not-being to being.

Perhaps the greatest merit of this view is its accord with the natural judgement of mankind. We know matter and we know thought as sharply contrasted; and to deny the reality of this contrast is in fact to undermine the foundations of all knowledge.

Materialism accounts for the forms and qualities of matter which extend to the sensitive life of animals, including man. It fails to give any account

of the intellectual life, and can, on its own principles, only assume that it is a further development of the sensitive. In its excuse, it may be remembered that a vast number—in most people, the immense majority—of human functions are sensitive (directly or reflexively) and not intellectual.

Idealism gives us a wide and stimulating view of the relativity of knowledge; but in its turn it evidently courts failure when it attempts to absorb one of the two terms of the relation into the other.

Scholasticism, because content to recognise facts in their natural order, is both materialistic and idealistic, in virtue of its recognition of the point beyond which the human intelligence, with its present data, cannot proceed.

Materialism and Idealism both try to look through a brick wall. They observe much in so doing that a less earnest scrutiny would leave unnoticed. But the wall remains impervious. Scholasticism expends less effort and obtains a more satisfactory result by simply looking over the top.

## NATURAL THEOLOGY

From a period before the earliest historical records, mankind in general has attributed the production and maintenance of the order of nature—including man-

kind itself—to supernatural agency. The common or popular ideas on the subject were embodied in myths or romances, with divine or semi-divine personages for their heroes, and dealing with human interests and natural phenomena on a gigantic scale. There existed also among the more thoughtful or cultured a philosophy of religion, or natural theology, which did not, generally speaking, concern itself with the events narrated by the mythologies; though it may possibly have entered in some degree into the instruction imparted to the initiated in the secret rites or “mysteries,” participation in which was the privilege of an inner circle among the followers of most ancient religions.

The manner in which myths arose is exceedingly obscure. Several theories have been constructed to explain it, but none is entirely satisfactory.

We are, however, not particularly concerned with this question here. The point to which we desire to call attention is that the mythopœic faculty or habit bears witness to a universal, or all but universal, conviction that the phenomena of nature and the destinies of human beings are in some way dependent on the action of supernatural intelligence and will. This conviction was, indeed, embodied in a crude and often coarse and grotesque form; but the uneducated and unthinking could scarcely have expressed it or understood it in any other. In the *Works and Days* of Hesiod, as in Milton's poem, the Creator appears as the prodigious Architect of the world. In the Homeric poems, gods mingle almost

on equal terms with men, and exercise their providential functions with a very human amount of prejudice and mutual antagonism. In the Greek Tragedians the Fates are still the arbiters of human affairs, but the dramatic interest no longer includes their obscure personalities, but lies wholly in the human complications which are directed by their influence. Plato, and after him Cicero, rejects mythology entirely, as unworthy of its divine subject. Aristotle reaches the conception of God by rational argument, and simply leaves mythology out of account. The fact appears to be that the idea of Divine agency is one of the earliest attained by mankind, and is embodied naturally in a highly concrete form by those who are familiar only with concrete experience; but the idea becomes more abstract and free from admixture of the fabulous as the human mind attains higher powers of thought and reasoning. The subject has been further developed in two directions, and extends, as a subject of controversy, it is needless to observe, down to the present moment. In one direction, it is sought to identify God with nature in one or other of its different aspects. In the other, a demonstration of the existence, and something of the true nature, of God is put forward as conclusive. This demonstration is originally due to Aristotle, but was completely formulated by St Thomas Aquinas, who added considerably to its extent and precision, and who on this subject represents the position of Scholastics in general.

The nature of this demonstration will now be briefly indicated.

1. The argument for the existence of God may be summed up as a theory of universal causation. Causality, or the necessary dependence of all things and events on a preceding cause, is the universal law of existence. We need not now enquire as to how our certainty of the universal character of the law has been obtained. The fact that it exists is undeniable; and upon it are based the five arguments by which St Thomas seeks to demonstrate the existence of God. These are:—

(a) The necessity of an original impulse to set things in motion; which impulse must come from a source that is itself unmoved, since nothing can be moved but by something else.

(b) The sequence of cause and effect in general, which in the same way requires a first cause, or cause of all causes.

(c) The distinction between what exists necessarily, *i.e.*, what cannot be thought of as non-existent, and that which exists contingently—*i.e.*, which need not exist, and which therefore may not have always existed, and may not always continue to exist. It is obvious that there is nothing in the world that is, in this sense, necessary. All is contingent, or may, at some time, not have existed, and may at some time cease to be. But something must always have existed, else nothing could exist now; for *ex nihilo nihil fit*. And since we cannot say of any of the elements of the universe that they must necessarily

always have existed, there must be necessary existence beyond the sphere of the universe—which necessary Being is God.

(*d*) But contingent existence is of almost infinite variety. The forms of existence which we know in this world are innumerable, and there may be elsewhere countless forms again with which we are unacquainted. But the distinguishing qualities of each must have a source. They cannot arise from nothing. And the common source of all must evidently in some sense possess all the qualities it imparts. Consequently, all perfection is in God, whether physical, moral, or intellectual; since He is the source of all. He cannot, however, be the source or author of imperfections, or evil; because evil, or imperfection, is the absence of perfection, or goodness, in any particular object; and it is plainly inconceivable that He should both have all perfections and at the same time be without some perfections.

(*e*) Lastly, the world shows evidences of design in the adaptation of means to ends. The order of nature is capable of being intellectually appreciated and formulated by us, as in the science of Logic or Mathematics, in which concrete objects are not directly dealt with, but which are founded upon our experience of such objects. Since, then, we can perceive an intellectual order within the physical, we must conclude that it is really there. And, this being so, it must have been put there by a Being who is Himself intelligent. Consequently, we may by the study of nature, in which all men are engaged more

or less, attain to some true conception of the Divine intelligence.

From these five arguments, which are really different ways in which the principle of causality may be represented, it may be inferred that God is personal, that He is infinite, and that He is good; that He is all-wise and all-powerful, and that He is eternal. For -personality exists, in man at least, and therefore must be due to a cause which has the element of personality (which is by no means the same thing as limitation) in itself. Necessary Being can have no beginning and no ending, and cannot be either dependent on, or in any sense limited by, any other form of being. Or (to put this point in a slightly different form) Necessary Being must be infinite, since it must be necessary always and everywhere, if necessary at all; and infinity cannot be divided. There cannot be two Gods or two first causes. And wisdom, power, and goodness have their source in God, and must therefore be completely possessed by Him.

2. The scope of these arguments will become more clear when we consider the counter argument of Kant. He held the proof of the existence of God from causality to be invalid, for the only reason which can, as it seems, possibly invalidate it, viz., that causality is not universal. The law of causation, Kant argued, certainly prevails in the phenomenal world, or that world of which we have experience; but, he considered, there is no ground for asserting that the same law prevails beyond the phenomenal



and in the transcendental sphere. We cannot say that the world, as a whole, is the effect of a cause, though we must say this of everything in the world.

Now, it is of course true that we can have no experience either of causation or of its absence beyond the sphere of phenomena. But are we therefore bound to refrain from asserting that the universe, like all it contains, is due to a cause outside itself? It would seem not; and for the following reason:—If the first cause is itself uncaused, it puts an end to the chain of causation, and so far seems to transgress the very law by which we establish its existence. If, on the other hand, there is no first cause, there must either be an endless chain of causes (which is inconceivable); or else a circle of causes, in which the first cause would be its own mediate effect (which is self-contradictory, and therefore impossible). Consequently, the first cause must be self-caused—*i.e.*, infinite, self-existent, or *actus purus*; and thus the chain of causation stops, but only when it reaches infinity. Thus the scholastic argument does not assert the prevalence of causality, in the sphere of which we have no experience. What it does assert is that, when the universe was created in time and space, it was created according to the law which it universally exemplifies. As everything in the universe is the effect of a cause, so the total sum of these effects must all have a cause, which must itself be infinite, else it could not be the *first* cause.

Kant, however, found an argument for the existence of God in the moral side of human nature.

The sense of duty, which appears clearly as an original endowment of human nature on analysis of the moral consciousness, demands for its origin and ultimate satisfaction the existence of God, and the immortality of man. This speculation, however, is hardly entitled to be called an argument—though it still finds some favour; and it brings into strong relief the weakness of Kant's system, which, being based only on subjective analysis, is manifestly precluded from giving any rational account of what is objective or external. The method, in fact, assumes at the outset that things in themselves are unknowable, and is therefore not legitimately able to demonstrate their existence, since it is unable without self-contradiction to deal with them at all. And the Critic of Practical Reason is, in fact, in the same case with regard to the existence of God as the Critic of Pure Reason with regard to the "thing-in-itself." Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, attempting each in his own way to surmount this difficulty by the identification of subject and object, propounded ideas of God more or less pantheistic in tendency, and attenuated the concept of a Creator almost to vanishing point. With Fichte, indeed, God is no more than a convenient name for the moral order which is discoverable in the world, and cannot be said to have any real existence—a use of the term which has been adopted by some of the so-called Ethical Religions of the present day. With Schelling God is, in fact, the "Indifference-point" at which subject and object are one. The existence of God may, indeed, be

demonstrated from the facts of experience, but rather by way of divinising the totality of existence than by postulating a supreme Will and Intelligence as its cause. Schelling traces the development of a three-fold potency in the Divine Nature in relation to created existence, much as the mediæval mystic Eckhart had done. Hegel, again, conceiving God as the Absolute Idea, whose thought is the essence of creation, and of whose being creation is itself a mode or development (though he had much in common with the Thomist view of creation), falls short of the distinctively scholastic conception of God as existing independently of creation and unrelated to it in His own being. It is not perhaps easy to say how far the title of Pantheism is strictly applicable to the Hegelian idea of God; but that its radical distinction from the Thomist view is of a Pantheistic character is not open to question.

3. The Ontological argument, which has already been briefly mentioned (see *Ontology*), was first definitely formulated by St Anselm, and was restated in a form not essentially different, by Descartes and Leibnitz. It proceeds from the existence in the mind of the idea of God to argue the necessity of His existence; the idea being thus considered as innate, or impressed on the mind directly by God Himself. St Anselm conceived this innate idea as simply that of the greatest being conceivable, and argued that unless the greatest conceivable had also a real existence, it would be possible to conceive a greater still, as existing not only in the intellect,

but also as an external reality. Descartes held the existence of God to be that of the highest reality—the necessary eternal and perfect existence ; and since this degree of reality is higher than that which we find in ourselves, the true idea of it cannot have been formed by ourselves, but must have been given by God. Leibnitz, again, considering the idea of God as that of the most perfect and greatest being, held that existence was necessarily implied in it, since whatever follows from the definition of anything can be predicated of that thing.

The fallacy of these arguments is sufficiently obvious. The existence of an idea in the mind, however clearly, can of itself be no proof of its existence outside the mind ; and existence is not an attribute than can be predicated or withheld, but is the pre-requisite condition of all attributes.

At the same time, it must be admitted that the existence of the idea in the mind is the practical starting-point ; and the enquiry as to how it has been obtained must be conducted by the light of experience and reason. But this is common ground, and is the method by which the Thomist argument proceeds. For when an argument such as those given by St Thomas is stated in logical form, it is not at all implied that the precise steps of the argument have all been present to the mind before reaching its conclusion. Formal proof is generally of the nature of verification of a hypothesis which the mind begins by forming ; and though the resulting conclusion can only be proved by logical

methods it is frequently not originally constructed by them.

The Ontological argument takes many forms, and is substantially that of those who rely on the evidence of emotions or aspirations which are more or less common to humanity. Its true conclusion would seem to be that the idea of God is part of the actual mental equipment of mankind; but that the only external reality corresponding to the idea is that general tendency of things which has somehow begotten it. This is in effect the use made of the argument by those, already adverted to, who employ the term God as a summary of the natural laws or principles with which morality is concerned. Thus, Matthew Arnold defines God as the "not-ourselves which makes for righteousness," J. R. Seeley as the Unity of Nature, and Dr Carus as the "all-pervading condition of any possible world."

4. Materialism is the attribution to matter (or the "substance" of Haeckel) of the powers and attributes of God. Matter has been stated to be eternal and infinite, and the source of all life and thought (Evolution). This view must be distinguished from that of Spinoza, which, while in many respects similar to it, postulates a divine element in the one substance which constitutes the universe. And God so conceived may, in Spinoza's view, though impersonal, be known and loved.

5. Agnosticism is a term invented by the late Professor Huxley to designate those who feel themselves unable to draw any transcendental inference

from their conscious experience. Huxley neither affirmed nor denied the existence of God, but maintained that it cannot be proved. His brilliant and fascinating works do not show more than a very limited and superficial acquaintance with the subject.

6. An attempt has recently been made to revive the view of Spinoza in a less materialistic form, and under influences which may be classed as Hegelian, with special emphasis upon the "immanence" which is the peculiar principle of the Spinozistic system. Immanence, as opposed to "transcendence," is taken to signify the inherence of God in the course of nature—physical, intellectual, moral, and social. The historical course of the universe is thus, in the Hegelian sense, a development of the Divine nature, and constitutes a progressive revelation of God from within, in which Revelation in the Christian sense is but one factor among many, and does not, as generally supposed, imply a communication from a wholly external or transcendent source. It would seem, further, that the advocates of this view desire to extend their conception of God beyond the confines of phenomenal existence, as being not merely immanent, but transcendent as well. It is difficult, however, to believe that this view is intended to be taken literally, or is seriously put forward. For nothing can be clearer than that immanence and transcendence exclude each other. If God is manifested in nature, not by external providence, but by actual inherence, He cannot transcend nature. To conceive of the Divine Being as both inherent and

transcendent is practically to conceive of two Gods, after the Gnostic manner, since an infinite existence immanent in phenomena cannot, without self-contradiction, be conceived of apart from phenomena at the same time; as the soul cannot be conceived of as immanent in the body, and at the same time existing beyond the limits of the body. To add a transcendent mode of existence to the immanent is, in fact, to divide the infinite, which, of course, is impossible and inconceivable. (See Note, page 92.)

6. Two further points of view from which the question may be considered remain to be noticed. The first is what is called Mysticism, and the other is Revelation.

By Mysticism is to be understood the direct contemplation or experience of God, by means of which those who are able to attain to it have a kind of evidence of His existence analogous to that which we have of the existence of qualities and things, *i.e.*, intuition. Mysticism has thus entered deeply into the philosophy of the subject. With the Neo-Platonists and Neo-Hegelians, and, again, with the various Gnostic sects, mystical contemplation or ecstasy was held to be the only certain way of attaining to the highest knowledge. In Buddhism, also, contemplation is the one means of full emancipation from the tyranny of sense. And there is an almost continuous succession of Christian mystics, both within and without the Church, the first of whom, the Pseudo-Dionysius,\* has laid down the

\* Probably an unknown writer of the fourth century.

principles of mystical theology with great clearness and conciseness. These are an exact inversion of those on which the demonstration of the existence of God is based. As the latter lead to the theoretical knowledge that God exists, so the former lead to an experimental knowledge of what God is. As we have seen, the former knowledge depends ultimately on sense-experience, from which the mind is led upwards to the idea of God as its cause. Mystical contemplation, on the other hand, removes all sensible images from the mind, bringing it thus immediately into the Divine presence, which in itself excludes all sensible images whatever, as being distinct from and above all sense-knowledge. The two systems of theology are thus complementary. The mind ascends by sensation, as by a ladder, to the idea of God ; but in contemplating God it has arrived at the summit, and is no longer occupied with the means by which it has ascended, and from which it has carefully to free itself, because the Creator, whom it is desired to contemplate, is absolutely and essentially distinct from His creatures.

It will be clear at once that such experiences as these cannot, from their nature, be a proof of God's existence to any one but the person by whom the experience is undergone. But it is often assumed that such experiences are possible for all or most persons by philosophical systems which depend, like the German Idealism, rather upon the attainment by mental effort of a certain transcendental point of view than upon constructive arguments. This



assumption also evidently underlies the fundamental position of Ontologism.

The mystical temper finds a place, as will have already been noticed, even in those systems which reject the idea of God as a transcendent being. Thus, for instance, Buddhism, Spinozism, the so-called Comtist Religion of Humanity, and even the pessimistic philosophy of Schopenhauer, all find room for an exalted contemplation of the source, or, in Schopenhauer's phraseology, the "kernel" of existence, no less than those popular and debased forms of Christianity, in which the emotional exaltation of "conversion" is the prominent feature.

In the system of the Catholic Church, mystical theology has a recognised place; but unlike other systems into which mysticism enters, the Church attributes to it no absolute evidential value, and founds no doctrine upon it.

*Revelation*, has only to be considered here as a whole. In detail it falls under the head of the special science of theology. But it now calls for mention, as being an evidence to those who accept it, for the existence of God which is necessarily of higher authority than any other, since it asserts that God has made known His existence and His will by

a direct message to mankind. The scholastic system accepts the Christian revelation as absolutely true and final within its own sphere; and its general philosophy is adjusted to this view; and the singular completeness and accuracy with which that philosophy takes in and accounts for the whole of human experience (even in directions undreamed of in the days of St Thomas) may be regarded as at least giving very strong support to the Christian revelation.

But it should be noted that the claims of revelation to be regarded as true and genuine are supported mainly by historical and literary evidence submitted to philosophical criticism. Philosophical conclusions of any kind, whether founded on experimental science or on pure speculation, must not be simply set against the doctrines which claim to be revealed, because those doctrines and the authority claimed by them must enter as factors into the sum of things which it is the province of philosophy to interpret. To solve the question of the existence of God in the negative without taking revelation into consideration, is really no less preposterous than it would be to solve it in the affirmative with a similar neglect of the conclusions of natural science.

The Christian religion is of course not the only one that claims the authority of revelation; and some definite estimate must be formed of the value and significance of each before the student can be fully equipped for the special consideration of the evidence for the truth of Christianity.

## MORAL PHILOSOPHY

Moral Philosophy (Moral Science or Ethics) deals with the conduct of individuals and of Communities. While there is no dispute about the data with which it is concerned, and which are simply those of human experience, there is much diversity of view as to the speculative principles which furnish the basis of morals. For since morals are a part, or an outcome, of the constitution of things in this world, the view taken of their origin must necessarily depend on that which is adopted of the origin of things in general.

The first consideration with which the science of morals has to deal is the object towards which conduct is directed, or, in other words, the motive on which conduct is based. This is unquestionably (in the widest sense) happiness; though in various special senses of the word, this statement is, and must be denied. For happiness is the only thing that can be the final object of our actions, or that can be desired for itself alone, and not as a means for the attainment of something further. Even self-sacrifice for another's good is undertaken for the sake of happiness, since it consists in the renunciation of a good thing for one which, in existing circumstances, is better. A poor mother who starves herself that she may feed her children renounces the happiness that sufficient nourishment would give her in order to obtain the greater happiness of seeing her children healthy; she prefers her children's welfare to her own; which is

only another way of saying that the former gives her more happiness than the latter.

Next, moral science is concerned with the means by which happiness may be secured; and this, it is agreed, is right action, as opposed to wrong action. It has further to determine in detail what kinds of action are right, and what are wrong, according to their tendency towards happiness or the contrary.

Lastly, it has to give some account of the sense of duty, which is our guide in moral questions, and without which no moral system can be conceived. For the sense of duty enters very largely into the constitution of happiness; no one can be altogether happy who is consciously failing in his duty; and, on the other hand, it is evident that the sense of duty, with all that it implies, is the one bond which holds human society together, and without which the world could only be the scene of unending and universal strife. Such a state of things was indeed conceived by Hobbes as the natural condition of mankind, which was brought to an end by a "social contract" for mutual defence and assistance; upon which contract the rights and consequent duties of human beings are based. J. J. Rousseau, imagining a similar contract, supposed it to have been preceded by an era of peace and harmony which the contract was intended to further.

Leaving, however, these entirely visionary accounts of the matter, in which no one now believes, we have to settle the vexed question of conscience (*συνείδησις*—*conscientia*), which in English (and in no other modern

language) has acquired the sense not merely of consciousness (which is all that the word etymologically signifies) of our own actions, but of a special consciousness of their moral quality, as right or wrong.

As will be readily understood from what has been said in the earlier chapters of this book, these questions have been variously dealt with.

1. The Theistic position requires that happiness, as the ultimate goal of action, should be identified with obedience to the will of God. For, as God is the ruler of the world, obedience to Him must be the only way of obtaining happiness and avoiding disaster. God has made the world on a certain plan, to which the inanimate and irrational portions of creation cannot but conform. Man, being endowed with reason and free-will, can, if he chooses, act against the laws of nature, which are those of God; but he must evidently court his own destruction in doing so.

Right action is therefore, in this view, action in accordance with those laws by which God governs the world. These laws are discoverable by reason, which in the various sequences and co-existences of events making up human experience, discerns the underlying principles on which they depend. Thus the Theistic, Catholic or Christian position, does not differ essentially from the Stoic principle of "life according to nature," or from the modern view of reason as the one guide to life. It merely adds to them the statement that both nature and reason are in accord with, because dependent on, the will of God.

Thus the details of right action are gradually evolved from experience by the collective intelligence of humanity, and moral obligation is constituted by the state of knowledge at any given moment; though the broad principles of morality are clear at the outset, and are not susceptible of change. Thus it was undeniably right for a mediæval judge to condemn criminals to the rack, the wheel, and the stake, while it would be as certainly wrong for any one to inflict those penalties at the present day; the principle in both cases alike being that it is a duty to obey the law, which embodies from age to age the general sense of society as to the methods most desirable for its own conservation.

Conscience has been thought by some philosophers and theologians to be a separate faculty of the mind, an inward monitor which indicates both the obligation and the method of right action. But the accurate psychological analysis of St Thomas Aquinas finds no room for the existence of such a faculty. In that view conscience is merely the consciousness which accompanies all human acts together with a rational perception of its accord or disagreement with the laws of morality, and a further rational knowledge of the responsibility of man for his actions to the Divine Ruler.

2. Those who have rejected the idea of a personal Divine Ruler of the world are obviously under the necessity of giving some other account than the above, both of the origin of the moral law, and of

that sense of duty which requires obedience to it from all men, even at their own cost.

This is a matter of some difficulty; for the sense of duty rests ultimately, as may easily be seen, upon the idea of a sanction—*i.e.*, of some penalty entailed by neglect of duty. And, though considerations of immediate personal well-being will sufficiently account for the generality of moral actions (even for those which involve self-sacrifice, as in the instance imagined above), yet the ideas of right and wrong go very far beyond this, and imply reference both to an external or objective standard of conduct, and to an external power by which that standard may be enforced. Thus, for instance, it is easy to explain the idea that it is *dulce et decorum pro patria mori*, on the ground that the act of devoting oneself to death for motives of patriotism may give greater immediate happiness than would be experienced in a prolonged life after an opportunity of so dying had been rejected. But how to explain the universal conviction that, under certain circumstances, a person *ought* to be willing so to die? What does *ought* mean in this connection? If it means merely that the persons who feel no such patriotic enthusiasm take a different view from that of the majority, where is the harm or wrong? The minority may be right, and at any rate cannot be blamed for pleasing themselves by living, as others please themselves by dying. But if there is any kind of action which is to be held absolutely wrong and blameworthy, there is implied an external standard of duty, to which all are bound to conform

under some pain or penalty. Moreover, this external standard cannot be merely the opinion of the majority, nor can the sanction be merely the disapproval of that majority; because this opinion and sanction themselves rest on the conviction of duty as an independent reality, which is the very thing that has to be explained. No one blames another for acting differently from the rest of the world, unless his conduct is opposed to the standard which is universally, however dimly, felt to exist. Nor do the harmful or beneficial results of the action really affect the question. Some very injurious acts are condoned or even admired, and others which do no harm are often severely blamed. Idleness and inactivity, which may injure no one but the slothful person himself, are universally condemned; but the most reckless and selfish ambition, which may do, and generally does, untold harm, is on the whole admired and respected.

The fact would seem to be (though it is far from being admitted by the upholders of subjective or "autonomous" morality, such as Comte, J. S. Mill, H. Spencer, or Von Hartmann) that the ideas of a transcendental standard and sanction are really latent in all minds, and these in fact constitute the idea of God, even though it may be in some cases unformulated and even repudiated.

Kant stands here, as in all questions of philosophy, midway between the two schools of transcendental and autonomous moralists. He is indeed generally identified with the latter, with which he mainly



accords in principle ; but he agrees with the former also in his assumption—however vague and, on his own principles, unjustifiable—of an ultimate transcendental foundation. His purely subjective critical method could reveal nothing beyond the fact that man is possessed of a sense of duty, apart from all considerations of direct personal advantage—the Categorical, as opposed to the Hypothetical Imperative. So far, he made morality autonomous. But he was compelled, by the necessity of giving a symmetrical adjustment to his system, to assume the existence of God as the only way of accounting for the existence of an irrational or moral element in human nature and conduct. In reality, he adds but little to the somewhat crude hypothesis of Reid, and others of the “Common sense” school, who held that conscience, or the “moral sense,” is an original faculty of the mind ; though he does not, like Reid, attribute to conscience an *a priori* discrimination of right and wrong in the concrete, but introduces the Categorical Imperative as giving only the principle of obedience to an absolute law ; the nature of that law being deduced by the pure reason, in the formula : “Act so that thy will might be universal law.”

Strictly “autonomous” moralists, on the other hand, seek to derive conscience, or the sense of duty, wholly from experience, as regards both its standard and its sanction. Thus Bentham, and James, and J. S. Mill refer its origin to the principle of utility, which by the law of association gives rise to pleasurable or painful feelings, according as it is followed

or opposed. Bain, in a similar manner, traces the origin of conscience to education under domestic or civil authority. Herbert Spencer further accounts for the deep-seated and intuitive character of moral judgements by attributing their organised and consolidated form to the principle of heredity, which by a process extending through all past generations has rooted them in the nervous system.

It may be observed here, that the Theistic, or heteronomous view of conscience is under no necessity of denying any of these processes, but asserts strongly that they can only begin to take place under the belief of a Divine Lawgiver and Judge; otherwise to explain conscience is practically to explain it away. Conscience loses its controlling power when it is seen to be nothing but an inherited instinct, and dependent on practical notions which may be wholly and must be partly erroneous.

Schopenhauer held the curious theory that the "stings" of conscience are due to a dim perception by the individual that he is in reality and fundamentally a mere mode of the universal being, and therefore in a sense suffers the wrong which his superficial egotism leads him to inflict;—a theory which is the legitimate outcome of his identification of being with an absolute will, from which the individual intelligence is supposed to arise. This seems, like much else in Schopenhauer's philosophy, to be due to a somewhat whimsical adaptation of the principles of Christian charity. Von Hartmann, in much the same fashion, would make the moral

law consist in "making the ends of the unconscious the ends of our consciousness."

3. Politics fall under the head of Moral Philosophy, inasmuch as political science consists in the application of the laws of morality to associations of individuals. The application of these laws to communities is necessarily more complex than it is to individuals; but the principles on which they rest are no less clear.

Politics may be divided under the three heads of National Administration, by which the internal welfare of a nation is sought; International Law, by which the due external relations of a state are provided for; and Economics, by which the principles of morality are applied to the commercial relations of individuals, in view of the laws which experience has made known as governing those relations.

All that need be observed on this subject is that there is and can be no conflict or divergence between individual and political morality, though it has sometimes been thought that there is such a divergence, mainly through disregard of the necessary balancing and modification of moral principles by one another. Thus an Anglican Bishop, some years ago, caused a good deal of dismay by asserting that the maxims of the Sermon on the Mount were impossible in Politics; in particular, the duty of forgiving injuries and turning the other cheek to the smiter, could not be practicable in political life. What the Bishop ought to have said was that the

principles of the Sermon on the Mount must be applied wholly and impartially, and not in fragments, in politics as in private life. The maxim of forgiveness is balanced by that of justice. Governments have to consider the interests of those whom they represent, and not to offer them a stone when they ask for bread. They may turn their individual cheeks to the smiter, and will no doubt be right in doing so; but they are certainly not authorised to extend the treatment to other people's cheeks.

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From the foregoing review of the various great philosophical schemes two facts seem clearly to emerge. 1. The extraordinary diversity of the views which they embody, to which attention has already been called; such partial coincidences as have been noted being perhaps more readily accounted for by the identity of the problem dealt with by all, than by any real and independent correspondence of thought. 2. That this diversity depends not on any opposition in the various accounts given of the facts dealt with, but on the way in which the facts are arranged in subordination to one another. The reality of experience, of thought, matter, sensation, is not denied, nor has it any different meaning in one system from that which is given to it by the rest.

But the significance of these facts is apprehended by each system as something wholly different from

that which the others attribute to them, according as they are approached from one side or another; the difference lies in the point of view; just as a table may appear to have four legs, three, two, or none, according to the point of view of the beholder, the one fact common to all views being that the object of consideration is a table.

Thus the Kantian, directing his attention to himself as the sphere to which his experience is confined, will naturally find such an explanation of the problem as he can achieve within the subjective sphere to which he has decided beforehand to limit his enquiries. The Idealist, having in his mind the presupposition of thought as the indispensable condition of reality, is necessarily influenced to reduce the universe to thought alone, though he may still execute various permutations and combinations with the ego, the non-ego, and the absolute; the Materialist, in like manner confining his attention to sensible experience, can only represent everything in terms of that experience; while the Sceptic, the Agnostic, and the Pragmatist, like timid bathers, are content to disport themselves in the shallows of phenomenal experience, without venturing into the deep water of speculation in order if possible to discover what lies beyond them. It would therefore almost seem that the results attained by any system are identical with its fundamental principles; in other words, method is everything; it is merely a question of the standpoint from which we choose to see the table.

If so much is admitted, one of two conclusions

must follow. Either we must say that philosophy is the vain pursuit of a phantom, and can lead to nothing—in which case we become Agnostics or Pragmatists, and so practically demonstrate that we cannot escape from Philosophy, even by refusing to philosophise—as Huxley founded a school in the very act of refusing to found one; or else we must hold that truth is only to be reached by a synthesis of all philosophies, at least, in their main principles—a conclusion to which neither founder nor disciples of any school can fairly be expected to give adherence.

Certainly it is very far from being the intention of the present writers to attempt any such synthesis. But it may be pointed out that many features of such a synthesis are presented by the Scholastic system; and though it would be too much to say that all other systems can as they stand, be combined within the Scholastic framework or outline, yet it may at least be shown that the main principles of each receive full recognition by the Scholastic method; and it may further be suggested that the points of conflict might be at least diminished in number and prominence, if not reduced to harmony, by the mutual modification of first principles which have appeared to conflict with one another only by reason of the exaggeration due to the attempt to make each one stand alone.

Let us take for an example the crucial question of the origin of things. All, says the Idealist, is fundamentally Thought. The absolute idea external-

ises itself as matter, and returns to itself through matter as spirit. As we have seen, there is much to be said in favour of this view. But it falls far short of an explanation. Simply to state that the idea externalises itself is not enough; we inevitably enquire, How? and there is no answer. The transition from thought to matter, from idea to phenomena, is a chasm, a lacuna; we want to see matter emerging from thought, not merely directed or realised by it; but we are not shown this. We are familiar with thought, since we think ourselves; and we are conscious of the matter which is part of ourselves, however it came to be so; but we can form no sort of notion of the way in which the one may pass into the other.

Again, the Materialist says that all is matter. Thought exists, indeed, but it is a function of matter, due to an inherent "endowment" of matter, which, even in its most primitive form, lives, wills, and desires. But, again, the transition baffles us. We can see matter performing a variety of functions and passing through an infinity of changes. But we cannot see it thinking, willing, or doing. We can imagine the cohesion of atoms in various forms. But we cannot imagine the rudimentary intelligence which impels them. The statement that it exists and acts really tells us nothing. We can no more follow in imagination the primitive, rudimentary desires of an atom than in experience we can follow the alleged spontaneous production of thought by the brain. To put together by main force the two

conflicting factors of the problem is not to explain either factor by the other, but merely to restate the problem. We get no more real satisfaction from the Materialist than from the Idealist; the attribution of thought to matter is as elusive as that of matter to thought.

But if an explanation breaks down at the very point where it is needed, it may indeed be suggestive; it may enlarge and correct our view in many directions; it may even throw doubt on some of our previous convictions; but, as an explanation, it cannot be considered successful.

But when, as in the case before us, we have two terms, each of which obstinately refuses to be reduced to the other, experience teaches us to look for their reconciliation to some third term, which, in virtue of some other constituent as medium, may be able to hold the two conflicting elements in combination.

Such a third term is offered us by the Creationist belief, in which the dualism of mind and matter is resolved by the attribution of both to an infinite, simple, intelligent, and omnipotent Creator, who does not indeed externalise Himself, but externalises His thought by the mere act of thinking, and thus causing things to emerge from nothingness. The result is neither mere matter nor mere thought, but matter informed and intelligible by thought, and thought acting upon and reacted upon by matter. Thus, the idea is the source of all reality; only, the idea is suspended, not on nothing, but in the Divine



mind ; and again, matter has not, indeed, thought for one of its functions, but is itself the embodiment of thought ; it is "endowed" with desire and will, but these are primarily God's. The materialist notion is redeemed from its very primitive and retrogressive animism, which "endows" atoms with will and desire, much as the negro endows his rag-doll idol with the same faculties, or as the American humorist has endowed Brer Rabbit and Brer Fox with human speech and intelligence ; and the Idealist, though he may still hold fast to his root-principle, need dwell no longer in Cloud-Cuckoo-Town.\*

The act of creation is, indeed, still inscrutable ; as is the hypothetical transition from matter to thought, or *vice versa*, in the other systems. But here it has not the character of an obstacle to explanation ; it is, in fact, the explanation itself, because it is conceived as the act of a uniquely transcendent being, and so incidentally accounts for much of the obscurity in which the subject of cosmology is involved, and which is transmitted from it to other subjects of philosophical enquiry—an obscurity which all other systems (unless perhaps the fantastic imaginations of Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann) are precluded from even attempting to explain. It may also be remarked that the Creationist view is not a hypothesis invented—like the Will or the Unconscious—simply *ad hoc*, but is due to the primitive and spontaneous action of the human intelligence ; so that its efficacy in this particular connection as an explanation, and its basis

\* Aristoph., *Birds*.

in the "common sense" of mankind, have a mutually confirmatory effect.

Even the Agnostic position is not without its affinity to the Scholastic. It consists, as has been shown, merely in drawing an arbitrary line on the far side of sensible experience, and refusing to enquire beyond it. But such refusal is, after all, no more than a disregard of the question what, or whether anything, lies beyond the line ; it is not an assertion that there is nothing, but only that (what is admitted) we can know nothing of it in any case by sensible experience. But this is precisely what St Thomas says of God ; and the Thomist can go with the Agnostic quite to the end of his short journey, though he is not obliged to stop there.

*Note to page 72.*

#### NOTE ON IMMANENCE AND TRANSCENDENCE

The word "immanent" is frequently used to express the universal presence of the Divine Nature in creation, without any implication of identity between the two. In this sense, however, immanence is merely, so to say, a mode of transcendence. Though God is everywhere and in all creatures *per præsentiam, essentiam, et potentiam*, He is as distinct from them as if He were not present in any way. The distinction is between two incommensurable modes of being: one, that of the unique and infinite Divine Nature, the other, that of the finite being which is dependent for its very existence upon Him. In this sense it is, of course, perfectly true that God is both immanent and transcendent: in other words, that there is no local separation between God and creation, since the Divine Nature is supralocal, not being in space at all; the distinction is "intellectual," and not "real."

But the Spinozistic meaning of immanence implies that God and creation are one: all is God, and God is all. It is evidently only in this sense that God's immanent presence can be really distinct from His

transcendence ; and it is equally evident that if God is immanent in this sense, He cannot be transcendent in any sense. The theory referred to in the text therefore rests upon an ambiguous use of the word in two wholly incompatible senses.

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